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To: Mr. Ted Lattanzio **Date:** February 7, 1994

From: R. A. Carchman RAC

Subject: Comments on "Study Links Passive Smoking and Respiratory Symptoms in Adults

1. Only 38% of the original population returned for the study. In the absence of more information, this suggests that the sample was biased, probably selected for persons who knew that they had respiratory troubles and returned for further medical contacts.

2. How come that only person with a diagnosis of asthma had incomplete ETS-exposure data? Deleting asthmatics from the material could introduce an important bias as they would have larger changes in spirometry an ...hetically) if they had not been exposed to ETS, the whole relationship would have

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3. The symptom description is ir ... mucous membrane irritation or dry cough.

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4. The only significant finding ... ician's point of view it could well have been a random si ...ge as the symptoms which one would expect be elevated a... airways irritation and dry cough (certainly no chronic bronchitis which ... :stionnaire, suggesting that the persons selected for the initial study were not a... ample of the population).

5. The odds ratio for dyspnea is unbelievably high with large confidence intervals (calculation error??). One suspects that the group was not homogenous and that perhaps persons with permanent lung or cardiac disease were included.

Jaakkola spent a year with Margret Becklake while her husband was doing a postdoc. The material in the study was not set up to study ETS and it is unclear on what basis the cohort was originally collected. The review of the study gives the impression of "Here is a material, play around with it and see if you can find something" approach. We are pursuing these questions.

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